

# ALEXANDRIA DIVORCE RING COACHES CLIENTS IN CLEVER LYING

## DON'T TELL COURT ALL YOU KNOW

System Lawyer Advises How Decrees Can Be Secured Speedily in "Little Reno."

By HARVEY L. COBB.  
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Alexandria divorce lawyers, so daring have become their practices, actually coach their clients against telling the truth.

A concrete example, made in the presence of three Times reporters, was the declaration of Oscar C. Thomas, one of Little Reno's legal lights, who cautioned the three supposed clients several times against telling too much.

"The less you tell me, the better off we'll both be," he declared several times, as the clients were explaining their case to him.

Under the laws of Virginia, as in every other State, the law provides that the defendants in every suit must be notified, either by publication, or direct notification, or both.

Typical of Tactics.

The case of Thomas and the three Times reporters is cited as typical of the tactics employed by the divorce ring in their treatment of absent defendants and their efforts to "cover up" their cases to make them appear legal on their face, yet at the same time prosecute the suit, without the knowledge of the defendant or of any likelihood of the defendants ever becoming acquainted with the fact that he or she has been sued.

Sense of fair play and respect as to the rights of the defendants has been lost sight of, and clients are deliberately told that corroborative evidence can be secured upon payment of the fee.

Not all, however, the reader must understand, are subject to the frailties of human nature in their pursuit of the dollar, gotten by greed and corrupt practices through the malicious practices of the lawyers who are growing rich with feeding the divorce mills of Virginia.

The best evidence, which cannot be refuted, is the court records themselves, showing the records of Little Reno divorce lawyers, as to the number of divorces they have secured.

The figures as taken from the Little Reno corporation divorce court records, show the following:

208 in a Year.

Davis and Budweiser, the divorce kings, secured 208 divorces, within a period of little over a year, almost half of them secured on evidence furnished by Mary L. Baggett, making deposition that the party suing for the divorce was known to her, and had lived at her house for more than one year.

R. B. Washington, one of the princes at Judge Moncreux's court, ran second with 153 "broken ties" while Charles Henry Smith, representative to the Virginia assembly who has announced his opposition to the Hall anti-divorce measure in every shape, form and fashion, comes third, with eighty-two divorces.

Other lesser legal lights ranked as follows: C. E. Corgan, fifty-five; Edmund Hill, Jr., fifty-four; W. P. Woll, forty-nine; Smith and Woods, forty-three; H. N. Garner, thirty-six; P. P. Russell, twenty-five; S. G. Booth, seventeen, and L. P. Harlow, nineteen.

When The Times expose began, many—a great many, of Virginia's best lawyers have declared themselves against the divorce vice and are taking steps to remove the stigma from their State.

However, hundreds of cases for divorces are now pending. Other hundreds have been granted during the year 1921, while the party defendants of the suit have never had a chance to enter their protest.

Cases of desertion, charges of insanity, adultery, and other causes have been set up as cause for action, divorces have been granted, and clients in many cases have remarked, many of them, under the direct declaration of their counsel that their divorce was legal and that they were at liberty to remarry again.

To the three Times reporters, who went to him for one of these illegal divorces, Oscar C. Thomas told how divorces could be secured without danger of detection or knowledge by the defendants that serious charges were made against them and that they were being sued for a divorce.

The first link in the chain of the illegal practice is the establishment of a "domicile" in the State of Virginia. This is done by having false depositions made by Virginia people who for ten, twenty, or thirty dol-

Ex-Empress of Austria,  
Who Leaves Spain to  
Return to Exile



FORMER EMPRESS ZITA.

LONDON, Feb. 3.—Former Empress Zita of Austria has left Lisbon for Madeira Island to rejoin her husband in exile, said an Exchange Telegraph dispatch from Lisbon. She went to Switzerland to visit her sick son.

lars swear under oath that they have known the person suing for divorce more than a year and know that they have lived in the State for more than a year.

To a Times reporter, in quest of an "overnight" divorce, upon payment of \$50, he was given a receipt by one of Alexandria's professional "domicile caretakers," stating that she had known him for more than a year and that he had actually lived at her house for one year, from January 1, 1921, to January 1, 1922.

As a matter of fact this writer was never in Alexandria prior to his investigation. During the investigation he went under an assumed name, in order to avoid suspicion in seeking so many different divorces.

Hundreds of Them.

Despite the fact, however, the receipt was issued showing that this particular woman had known him personally for a number of years and that he had lived at her home—a twelve-room house—with hundreds of other Washingtonians.

Upon establishing this "overnight" residence the next step in the proceedings is a showing of horse play in notifying the other party to the suit, that he or she is about to be sued for divorce on grounds of desertion, adultery, insanity, or some kindred action.

Upon the trio's entering into negotiations for the divorce, Attorney Thomas was notified the place of residence of the supposed husband.

"Now, the less you tell me, the better off we'll both be," Thomas declared.

"It would never do to send the notice of suit to your husband's address, and it is never done. The notice is sent to some fake address, under registered cover. The letter, of course, is not delivered, is returned, and is made a part of the legal court records."

Subsequent investigation by The Times reporter showed that the Alexandria divorce courts contain hundreds of returned letters such as Thomas described.

"Inquiry of some of the cases developed the fact, according to postoffice records outside of Alexandria and in the Virginia assembly, that in many cases no such address exists, nor did the city directory show even the name of the street given as the address."

Accepted Method.

The practice of sending these notices to fake addresses, Thomas declared, was the common accepted method of the Alexandria divorce lawyers and "the best way to handle the matter to keep the spouse from becoming aware of the suit."

The third step of the proceedings, Thomas explained, after the residence is established and the defendant to the suit "legally" notified, was the newspaper publication of the suit.

"This," said Thomas, "can be done either in the Alexandria Gazette, which has little circulation outside of Alexandria, or in the little paper at Arlington county court house, which I control. I think in your case, probably it would be best to publish it in the Arlington paper."

"Published in that sheet, there isn't one chance in a million of anybody's ever seeing it."

"As to witnesses who will swear that they have known you for more than one year, and that you have lived in their home for a year, there will be no trouble as to that. There are people here in Alexandria, good, safe, trustworthy folks, who make their living 'knowing people' and there will be no trouble whatever in getting your domicile affidavits."

"I've got ten neighbors, within a half mile of my house, any one of whom will sign your affidavit for me," Thomas declared, "or I can take care of it here in my own house. The lady wouldn't want to stay over here anyway, would she? At the present time the house is pretty full with other people over here for the same purpose."

N. Y. DRY FORCES FIND LACK OF CO-OPERATION

The morale of the prohibition enforcement machine at New York is breaking, because of lack of co-operation from other Federal Government agencies, which refuse to help stop smuggling of liquor into New York city and other large consuming centers, State Prohibition Director Day of New York today informed Prohibition Commissioner Haynes.

Director Day openly charged that agents of the customs service are not co-operating with Federal enforcement authorities. Commissioner Haynes has received similar complaints from other State directors, chiefly those in border or coast States.

## OIL MEN BREAD HOUSE PROBE OF MEXICAN PLOTS

Reports of New Revolution Believed Inspired, in Hope of Halting Inquiry.

By Universal Service.

The scandal growing out of the delay in recognition by the United States of the Obregon government in Mexico has become a leading topic with members of the Senate and House.

The action of Congressman Campbell, chairman of the House Rules Committee, in referring the Connally resolution to the State Department is not an unusual procedure. Unofficial reports, however, indicate that the State Department would prefer not to have an investigation of the scandal at this time. These reports formed the basis of talk in Congressional circles.

Quite aside from what may be the attitude of the State Department in regard to the Congressional investigation of intrigues of the oil interests in Mexican plots, Washington is entertaining various and sundry representatives of the moneyed groups that want to block the probe. These interests are spreading the word that there will be no investigation—that there must not be one.

Friends of W. E. Buckley, head of the American Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, on his leaving Washington a few days ago, quoted him as saying he had assurances that there would be no Congressional inquiry into oil and its revolutionary ramifications.

Connally on Guard

Congressman Tom Connally, who introduced the resolution asking for an investigation, has his plans made to guard against the pressure being exerted by the oil brigade. It is understood Connally is prepared to place the facts on record in such a way that an investigation will be forced, automatically by public opinion if covert attempts to quash the inquiry become formidable.

Reports reached Washington today that a new revolutionary movement against President Alvaro Obregon is being formulated by the revolutionaries. They are ready to muster their forces as indicated. Just how strong the smell of oil may be in this movement is not defined at this time, but in the list of Mexicans reported to be preparing the revolution occur the names of men already exposed by Universal Service as having approached or having been approached by American oil and banking interests.

It is interpreted here that the reports of a new revolution brewing in Mexico are being spread with the purpose of having an effect on Washington.

The list of revolutionists includes leaders of factions who are known to have been and who are bitterly opposed to each other in several instances. That such elements, irreconcilable in their own circles, could not be induced to join any movement in concert is the opinion among Mexican experts in Washington.

Look to Felix Diaz.

The report makes it appear that the revolutionists look to Felix Diaz, now in New Orleans, to leave soon to take personal charge of the movement from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Francisco Murguia, Lucio Blanco, Pablo Gonzalez, Ignacio Bonillas, Pancho Villa, Rodriguez, Esteban Gantu and others are listed as being ready for the movement.

Universal Service revealed recently how on January 24 of this year Murguia together with a prominent official of the National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, conferred secretly with Pablo Gonzalez. That the conference had to do with spreading a report of a pseudo revolution in which every one inimical to the Obregon government was named as a participant is held to be a reasonable conclusion.

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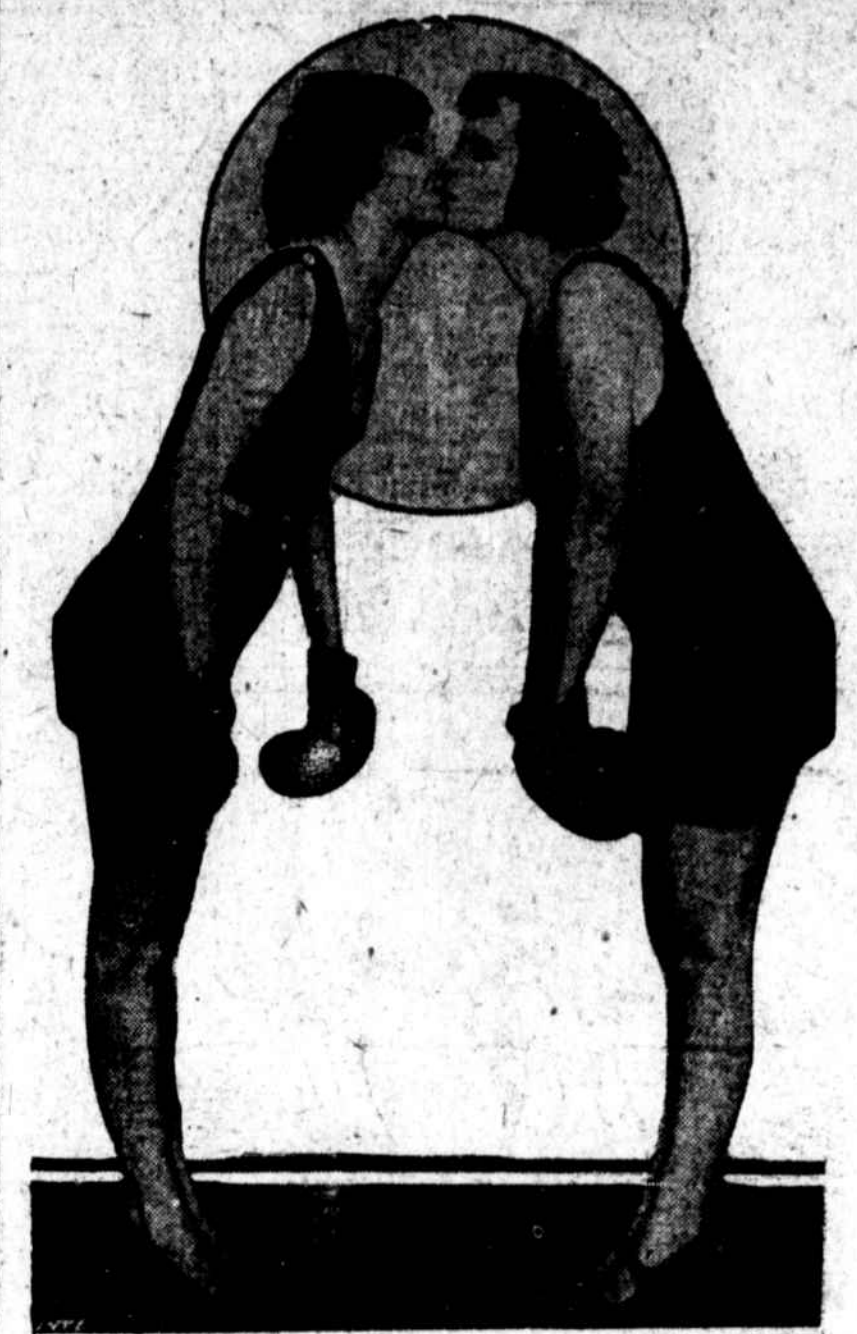
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## "KISS, GIRLS, AND STEP BACK." BAWLS REFEREE



The fur flies. These two female boxers, Miss May Devereau and Betty Palmer, have conceived the idea that it would be much more appropriate to kiss than shake hands, as is the custom of the pugilists of today. Their knowledge of the manly art, demonstrated at exhibitions in New York, has startled followers of boxing.

## BANDITS STEAL AUTO AND \$600 OF D. C. VISITOR

John Driscoll, of Troy, N. Y., Stopping Here, Is Highwaymen's Victim.

Four highwaymen last night held up at pistol point John Driscoll, twenty-four years old, of Troy, N. Y., stopping in Washington at the Bellevue Hotel, Fifteenth and I streets northwest, robbing him of his jewelry and cash, amounting in value to \$612, and then drove off with Driscoll's car which he also valued at \$5,000.

The robbery occurred on the Washington-Baltimore boulevard, about two miles north of Hyattsville. The four men stood in the road and called to Driscoll to stop his machine. Believing the men wanted a "lift," Driscoll stopped the machine and a moment later he was looking into the muzzle of a revolver.

"Up with your hands!" shouted one of the highwaymen.

Fearing for his life, Driscoll told the police, he did as commanded, and then the highwaymen took a diamond ring from his hand, a scarf pin and other articles. Ordering Driscoll to walk toward Hyattsville, the bandits leaped into the machine and drove off toward Baltimore.

Driscoll said the men were white and that he could identify two of them.

JAPS TO SCRAP OFFICERS, BUT WILL SALVAGE SHIPS

Japan will not actually sink the warships scheduled to be scrapped, but first will remove from them all convertible construction material, a member of the Japanese delegation declared today.

Japan cannot afford to sink vessels outright and thus destroy many tons of excellent steel which might well be salvaged and used for other purposes," the official said. "The ships will be sunk, no doubt, but whatever can be salvaged from them will be used to good purpose."

The official added that "Japan will not hesitate, however, to scrap a large number of naval officials."

chairman of the committee, they did virtually no divorce business.

Smith, however, according to the divorce cases filed, has anything but an enviable record. With his partner, W. P. Woods, he did a wholesale divorce business, and the records show that Mary L. Baggett, Little Reno's famous domicile depositor, signed the majority of the depositions on whose evidence Moncreux granted most of the decrees.

Whether or not Smith can explain how Mrs. Baggett's name appeared repeatedly in the suits which he and his partner filed, will be a matter that Smith's committee will have to decide.

The bar association has been roundly criticized for the appointment of Smith to a place on the committee, due to the fact that he used Mrs. Baggett to make the depositions in swearing that the plaintiffs to the suits had lived at her house continuously one year.

Under the Virginia law, perjury or the procuring of another person to commit perjury, is punishable by confinement in the penitentiary for not less than one, nor more than ten years, or in the discretion of the jury confinement in jail not exceeding one year or fines not exceeding \$1,000, or both.

To Open New Branch P. O.

A branch postoffice will be opened in Campbell's drug store, Fourteenth and Decatur streets northwest, February 16. Facilities have been provided for purchase of money orders, registry and parcel post stamps. Employees of the city sanitation will operate the station.

## EVELYN NESBIT GONE; FRIENDS FEAR SUICIDE

Moneyless Girl Missing Three Weeks After Eviction From Tea Room.

NEW YORK, Feb. 3.—Where is Evelyn Nesbit?

The once famous butterfly of Broadway has vanished.

No longer do the habitués of the gay little woman whose wings seem to have been singed for all time by her stand in behalf of her one-time husband, Harry Thaw, when he was on trial for his life for the slaying of Stanford White.

A month ago Evelyn Nesbit was evicted from her tea room and apartment. Lee and Jake Shubert, her landlords, had her few shabby effects placed on the sidewalk by a city marshal.

Attempts Suicide.

The eviction was but one of a series of tragedies that have entered the life of the former belle of Broadway during the past few months. Some time before she was cast into the street by her landlords she had taken a huge overdose of morphine in an effort to die.

She was really evicted. Without funds and evidently without friends, the woman once the scintillating star and toast of all Broadway found herself alone on the sidewalk beside her meager belongings—a trunk and small handbag.

In a Hall Bedroom.

Next she found a little furnished hall bedroom at Broadway and Fifty-second street. There she placed the trunk and bag and started life anew.

Three weeks ago she dropped from sight. Since then one has been found who has seen her. Even in these bitter days just passed, when she tried to earn a living by conducting the little tea-room—and failed—she was a daily sight along Broadway. All her friends seemed to have deserted her. She was alone in a hall bedroom, with her little trunk, the small handbag, a bed and a chair.

The hall bedroom of a Broadway furnished room house is a far cry from the studios of Harry Thaw or the gilded tower studio in Madison Square Garden, where Stanford White held forth.

Those who know Evelyn Nesbit are expressing fear. They assert that she may be dead or dying. They say she may be lying ill in some little furnished room in a neglected part of the city.

The disappearance of Evelyn Nesbit has recalled her first attempt to conquer in the city where many try but few succeed. She came here to win fame as a model. She succeeded. Eventually she became the center of the ugliest murder case in the history of New York.

## STOKES CLAIMS WIFE FAVORED BIRTH CONTROL

Aged Hotel Man Testifies Malicious Theories Led to Spirited Discussion.

NEW YORK, Feb. 3.—William Earl Dodge Stokes was not in the least perturbed on the witness stand yesterday when Samuel Untermyer, attorney for Mrs. Helen Elwood Stokes, undertook to cross examine him. Mr. Stokes exploded something of a bomb in the afternoon's proceedings when he said that his former wife was a strong advocate of birth control, and that because of her belief in the theory the two had spirited discussions on the subject. Mr. Stokes admitted that he was not a believer in the subject.

The hotel man also testified that at the home of a Mrs. Phil Kearney Mrs. Stokes assaulted him.

Cook Saved Him.

"She took my face to threads," he testified, "and one of the marks I carry now. She kicked me, hurting my legs, and then flew at me with a knife, I fell into the kitchen, where the cook saved me."

The defendant witness stated to Justice Cohan that he was shocked to learn of his wife's views regarding the birth control theory, and said that he had never heard of her married people could never be happy unless children came to bless their union.

"I never brought or sent strange persons to Mr. Stokes' apartment," said the aged man, "nor did I ever choke or swear at her."

Swears Occasionally.

"But you do swear sometimes, do you not?" asked his counsel, Attorney Gainsburg.

"Why, yes, at times," answered the witness, but not at women."

Referring to the alleged attack of Mrs. Stokes, the hotel man said he was prepared to produce witnesses.

"Witnesses who saw the assault or whom you saw afterward?" questioned his attorney.

"Those who saw me after the scene occurred, answered Stokes. Justice Cohan had announced his determination to sit very late if it were possible to end the trial. Mr. Untermyer, however, asked for adjournment until today and shortly before 6 o'clock his request was granted.

Little Congress to Debate.

"Resolved: That the Little Congress condemn the proposed four-power pact with Great Britain, France and Japan."

Evelyn Nesbit, Broke,  
Vanishes; Friends  
Fear Suicide



EVELYN NESBIT.

## SUCCESSOR TO KENYON IS SHROUDED IN DOUBT

The refusal of Hanford MacNider, commander of the American Legion, to be considered a possible successor to Senator William S. Kenyon of Iowa has left the Iowa Senatorial situation in utter doubt, according to political leaders here today.

MacNider is reported to have been offered Kenyon's seat, but turned it down by saying he would "rather command the American Legion than sit in the United States Senate."

Senator A. B. Cummins, senior Senator from Iowa, said today he had "no idea" who would succeed Kenyon. The matter, he declared, was entirely in the hands of Governor Kendall. Congressman Sweet and Dickinson are considered possibilities.

## TEXAS GOVERNOR EXTENDS MEXIA MARIAL LAW ZONE

AUSTIN, Tex., Feb. 3.—Governor Pat M. Neff today issued a proclamation extending the marial law zone of Mexico to include all of Freestone county.

Marial law was proclaimed for Mexico in order to cope with the state of lawlessness which followed the rapid growth of the new oil field.

The zone was extended, it was stated, because scores of gamblers and bootleggers, driven from the city, had resumed operations just outside the zone, defying efforts of the police to put them out of business.



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